The matter is under consideration in consultation with the Government of Andhra Pradesh and other Central Government Ministries/Agencies. No final decision has yet been taken.

Decline in Production of Steel Plants Under SAIL

396. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a sharp decline in production in all the public sector steel plants under the Steel Authority of India Ltd. during the last three years;

(b) if so, the main reasons for the decline in production;

(c) the year-wise and steel plant-wise performance in these years;

(d) whether SAIL has any proposal to plug the loopholes and to increase the production in coming years; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) to (e) There has been a decline in the production of saleable steel during the last three years, due to the sluggish market demand. However, production of saleable steel during the current year is showing upward trend with improvement in market demand. The plant-wise performance for the last three years is as under:—

Unit '000 T

Saleable Steel (Actual)	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Bhilai Steel Plant	3582	3524	3352
Durgapur Steel Plant	1093	1259	1319
Rourkela Steel Plant	1180	1181	1114
Bokaro Steel Plant	3046	2748	2541
Alloy Steel Plant	201	154	99
Salem Steel Plant	133	177	119
VISL			57*

*Production of VISL has been included in 1998-99 subsequent to it becoming a unit of SAIL.